



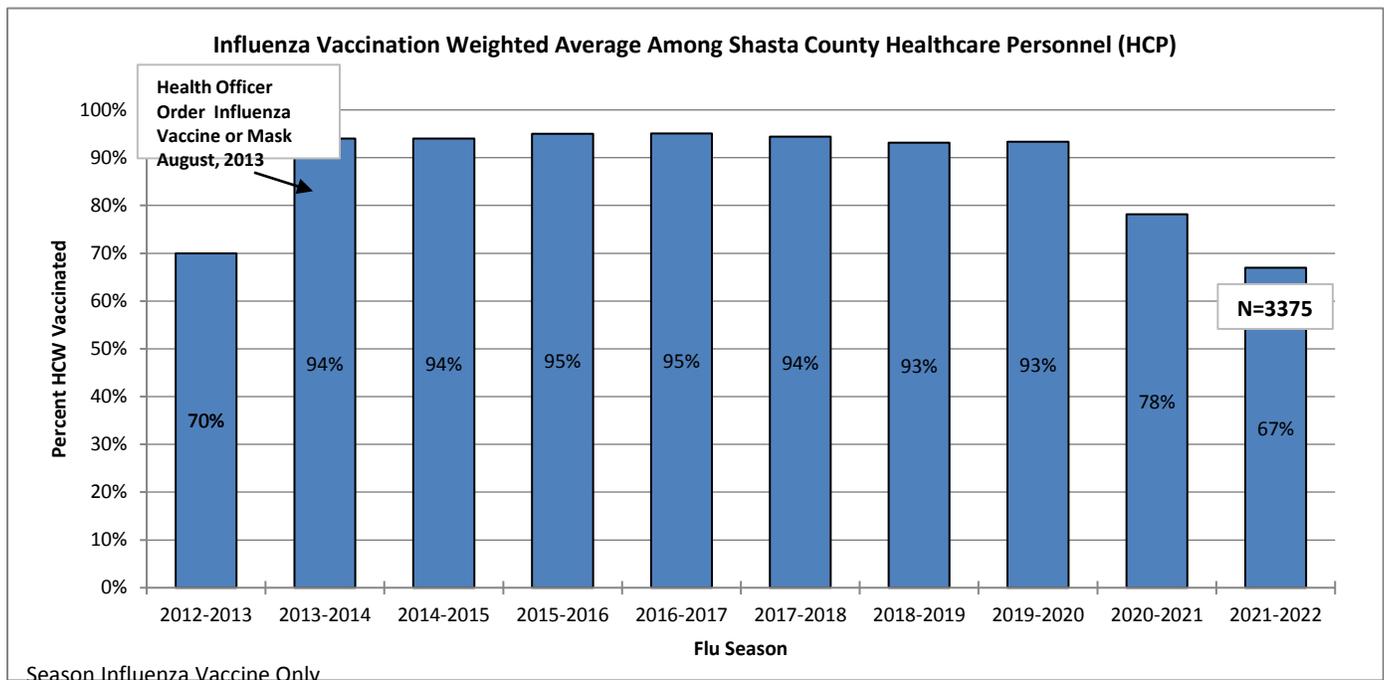
## Health Advisory

### Flu Vaccine or Mask for Health Care Workers (HCW) Update November 2, 2022

Please distribute to all providers in your practice

**This health advisory reports HCW flu vaccination outcome percentages locally from the 2021-2022 flu season. The HCW flu vaccine or mask order is on-going for 2022-2023 and all subsequent year flu seasons (November 1 through April 30 for the 2022-2023 season).**

A Health Officer order was issued August 2013 and is still in place requiring that all licensed health care facilities and ambulance services in Shasta County require their health care workers (HCW) receive an annual influenza vaccination or, if they decline, to sign a declination statement and wear a mask during each influenza season while working in patient care areas. Shown to increase influenza vaccination rates, similar flu vaccine policies are endorsed by numerous other jurisdictions, professional medical societies, patient safety organizations, hospitals, and other health care facilities in California, and across the nation.



HCW categories include employees, licensed independent practitioners (physicians, physician assistants and nurse practitioners with hospital privileges), volunteers, and contractors

Following the Health Officer order, the aggregate flu vaccine coverage for health care worker *employees* at all five local general acute care hospitals in Shasta County rose remarkably--from 70% to 94%-- in just one flu season (2012-13 to 2013-14). The aggregate flu vaccine coverage remained 93-95% from 2013-2014 to 2019-2020 but there was a remarkable drop in 2020-2021 to 78% (N=3697) and for 2021-2022 it has dropped to 67% (N=3375). For 2021-2022, one of the local hospitals (Patients') closed, which might be one of the

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Robin Schurig, MPH, CPH Branch Director

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contributing factors to the decline in total healthcare providers, but their data was excluded from this analysis. There was an overall decrease in healthcare worker vaccination rate at all the four hospitals with a remarkable decrease from 69% in 2020-2021 to 32% in 2021-2022 for Vibra, while Mercy Medical Center had the highest health care worker vaccination rate in 2021-2022 flu season.

The aggregate flu vaccine adherence documented for *non-employee licensed independent practitioners (LIP)* (physicians, nurse practitioners and physician assistants with local hospital privileges) for all three hospitals (Mercy, Shasta Regional and Vibra) combined increased to 76% in 2021-2022 as compared to all five hospitals (Mercy, Shasta Regional, Mayers, Patients' and Vibra) combined in 2020-2021 which was 69%.

The eight Skilled Nursing Facilities (SNF) reporting had a mean employee flu vaccine rate in 2020- 2021 of 75% but vaccine rates decreased to 45% for 2021-2022. Vaccination rates declined for all SNF's, and Marquis had the greatest drop from 85% in 2020-2021 to 26% in 2021-2022.

According to the California Department of Public Health (CDPH), the 2021-2022 flu vaccination rates among health care workers declined not only locally but across the state of California compared to pre-pandemic levels. Overall, California acute care hospitals had vaccination rate of 79% in 2020-2021 as compared to 85% in 2018-2019. As we approach a new influenza season, there is room for improvement in flu vaccination coverage. Reminders on the importance of influenza vaccine along with COVID-19 vaccine might be helpful.

### **Conclusion**

Since implementing the Shasta County HCW flu vaccine order in 2013, influenza vaccination rates across our communities' health care facilities has increased significantly. However, due to many challenges during the COVID-19 pandemic, there was a significant decrease in healthcare worker influenza vaccination rates from the 2019-2020 influenza season to the 2021-2022 influenza season. Providers, please make your best efforts to receive flu vaccine timely this year and to document that you have done so, protecting yourself and your family, as well as co-workers, patients, and their families. We appreciate your leadership and support in continuing this partnership to protect the residents of our community.

**This 2022-2023 flu season there are no changes to the flu vaccine or mask order, continuing under the authority of the Deputy Health Officer.** For a review of the rationale, goals, Health Officer order, duration, required facilities, enforcement, definitions, legal authority and an FAQ regarding flu vaccine or mask in Shasta County, please visit our website at [Flu Vaccine for Medical Professionals | Shasta County California](https://www.shastahhsa.net/flu-vaccine-for-medical-professionals). For any additional questions, please contact Daniel Walker, Epidemiology and Evaluation Supervisor, Shasta County HHS—Public Health at (530) 229-8488.

*Reporting annual vaccination rates:* Skilled nursing facilities and hospitals, please report flu vaccine rates for your employee, medical staff, contractor and volunteers to our infectious disease epidemiologist, by April 30th each year, at 229-8488 or via fax at 245-6760 or email at [dwalker@co.shasta.ca.us](mailto:dwalker@co.shasta.ca.us). Acute care hospitals have been required to report vaccine rates to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services as part of its Hospital Inpatient Quality Reporting Program for years.

Sincerely,  
DocuSigned by:



61D92C1CF4C1456  
Michael Vovakes, MD, MMI

Deputy Health Officer (Extra Help)

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Robin Schurig, MPH, CPH Branch Director

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